

Fact Sheet: Nathan Benderson Park

Background:

Nathan Benderson Park located at 2500 Honore Avenue is a unique 600-acre park which provides the public access to a 500-acre lake and two smaller lakes for non-motorized boating, fishing, bird-watching and related activities. The County purchased the site in the early 1990s. Before that, the property had been an active shell excavation pit for road construction fill. What is now a very large lake is the site of the prior "borrow pit." Cooper Creek enters the east side of the large lake and exits at the northwest corner. This park is situated west of I-75 and east of The Meadows residential community. The future North Cattlemen Road extension will provide additional access to the park and its amenities.

Existing park amenities include:

- Concrete boat ramp
- Fishing pier
- Small picnic shelter
- Restrooms
- Recreational trail

One of a handful of sites in North America identified as having all of the natural attributes that make up a premiere rowing facility, Nathan Benderson Park began hosting organized regatta competitions in 2009. The Sarasota County Commission has demonstrated its support for further development of the park into a state-of-the-art rowing facility with a financial commitment tied to Sarasota County's Tourism Development Tax (TDT).

Two successful regattas were held in 2009, followed by four in 2010. The Local Regatta Organizing Committee, Sarasota Board of County Commissioners, Sarasota Convention & Visitor's Bureau, and several hundred volunteers collaborated this Spring to sharpen the focus on development of Sarasota's future home of world class rowing at Nathan Benderson Park. Please visit the websites below for more information on Rowing Regattas.

www.rowingsarasota.com

www.scgov.net/ParksandRecreation/Rowing.asp

The park is bordered on the north by University Town Center, which is currently under development by Benderson Development. Benderson and Sarasota County have partnered together to plan for future improvements and have held several community workshops to solicit ideas for the future recreational opportunities at Nathan Benderson Park. This site is being carefully master-planned to ensure environmental and neighborhood compatibilities. The park has the capability to balance the community recreation needs and provide for large specialty events. The world class recreational venue would provide for Community Rowing (Youth, adults and seniors), Adaptive Rowing (Disabled Veterans, Youth/Adults with mental and physical disabilities), Corporate Events, Training and Practice for Junior and Collegiate crews, Local, Regional, National and International Regattas.

Current Activities and Next Steps:

- Sarasota County and Benderson Development are working to refine the park master plan. A public meeting will be held on Thursday, June 24, 2010 at 6pm at 2004 Longmeadow Sarasota, FL (The Meadows)
- County staff and Benderson Development will provide an update to the Parks Advisory and Recreation Council (PARC) on July 1, 2010 and to the County Commission on July 14, 2010
- For questions regarding the master plan, please contact Paul Blackketter at Benderson Development (paulblackketter@benderson.com)
- For questions regarding park amenities, the planning process and next steps, please contact 861-5000 or parksquestions@scgov.net